



# News Release

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**December 17, 2010**

## **Prepare for Winter's Seasonal Challenges**

The snowy, icy and cold weather months have arrived. Are you prepared for what Mother Nature might deliver?

Central Okanagan Deputy Emergency Program Coordinator Jason Brolund says, "While we encourage all residents and families to prepare an emergency plan at any time of year, you should consider adapting your plan to deal with some of the challenges that winter can throw at you whether you're at home or travelling."

For example, while most power outages are short and not considered an emergency, they can last longer due to difficult or stormy weather conditions. Brolund says, "As a result, your family should be prepared to handle any extended period without electricity because it can affect heating, lighting, even the availability of hot or running water." The Regional Emergency Program offers printed information from Public Safety Canada on How to Prepare for Severe Storms and for Power Outages. Pamphlets are available at the Regional District of Central Okanagan office, 1450 KLO Road and at local municipal offices. We have links to this information and that provided by area electrical utilities on the Regional District website. You'll find it at [regionaldistrict.com/EmergencyPlan](http://regionaldistrict.com/EmergencyPlan) or [GetPrepared.ca](http://GetPrepared.ca)."

You'll learn how to prepare in advance for all types of severe weather including blizzards and winter storms and ice storms. You'll find tips on how to make an emergency plan and how to prepare an emergency kit with basic supplies to keep you and your family self-sufficient for at least 72 hours.

With the holiday season approaching, many people will be travelling and could encounter severe weather. Public Safety Canada advises that if you must travel during a winter storm, try to do so during the daylight hours and let someone know your route and arrival time. It's also a good idea to prepare or purchase a winter travel survival kit for your vehicle because you never know when the weather will take you by surprise.

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The following information provided from Public Safety Canada [GetPrepared.ca](http://GetPrepared.ca) website:

### **Creating your Family Emergency Plan**

Every Canadian household needs an emergency plan - it will help you and your family to know what to do in case of an emergency. Remember, your family may not be together when an emergency occurs.

As part of the plan, there are a number of things you should discuss with your family, including:

- How will you contact each other in an emergency? Where will you meet if you can't go home?
- How does your children's school/day care communicate with families during an emergency?
- Is there someone in your neighbourhood who may be at risk and need extra help during an emergency?

For more information, visit [GetPrepared.ca](http://GetPrepared.ca), where you can download an emergency plan or complete it online. It doesn't take long to do, and could make a world of difference.

Once complete, keep the plan in an accessible spot, such as your emergency kit. You may also want to keep a copy of the plan in your car or at work.

### **Prepare an Emergency Kit**

In an emergency you will need some basic supplies. You may need to get by without power or tap water. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours.

You may have some of these basic emergency kit items already, such as a flashlight, battery-operated radio, food, water and blankets. The key is to make sure they are organized, easy to find and easy to carry (in a suitcase with wheels or in a backpack) in case you need to evacuate your home. Whatever you do, don't wait for an emergency to happen before getting prepared!

#### **Make sure your kit is easy to carry, in case you need to evacuate your home.**

A basic emergency kit includes the following:

- Water** – two litres of water per person per day (Include small bottles that can be carried easily in case of an evacuation order)
- Food** – that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (remember to replace the food and water once a year)
- Manual can opener**
- Flashlight and batteries**
- Battery-powered or wind-up radio** (and extra batteries)
- First aid kit**
- Special needs items** – prescription medications, infant formula or equipment for people with disabilities
- Extra keys** – for your car and house
- Cash** – include smaller bills, such as \$10 bills (travellers cheques are also useful) and change for payphones
- Emergency plan** – include a copy of it and ensure it contains in-town and out-of-town contact information